

#TRENDY THURSDAY

EUROPEAN UNION

New Competitiveness Compass for next 5 years

The European Commission has presented its major strategy aimed at achieving across-the-board competitiveness in the EU. The Competitiveness Compass seeks to “transform the excellent recommendations of the Draghi report into a roadmap”, focusing on three core areas of action: closing the innovation gap, boosting competitiveness-driven decarbonisation, and reducing dependencies to safeguard European security. Additionally, the strategy includes five horizontal enablers to achieve these goals: simplification, lowering barriers to the single-market, financing competitiveness, promoting skills and quality jobs, and better coordination in policies at EU and national level.

HEALTH

SANT Committee fully constituted

The European Parliament's first standing committee on Public Health was officially constituted as a fully-fledged committee yesterday morning. Adam Jarubas, from the EPP, was elected chairman and the committee held its inaugural meeting focusing on the recently adopted European Health Data Space (EHDS), the overdependence on API imports from abroad and deepen into present and future challenges for healthcare system. Additionally, MEPs discussed the upcoming EU Multiannual Financial Framework, unanimously proposing to prioritise health investments. Next meeting will be held on February 19th.

DIGITAL

Top EU chiefs due to enforce tech law

Several MEPs, industry bodies, and NGOs are urging the European Commission to enforce the Digital Markets Act (DMA) and accelerate investigations into Alphabet, Apple, and Meta to meet the committed deadline. These US tech giants are under investigation by the EU for alleged unfair competition practices in the digital market, with the Commission pledging to conclude its investigations by March 2025. In three separate letters addressed to the Commission's Executive Vice-Presidents, Virkkunen and Ribera, the ralliers accuse the Commission of disregarding the DMA and call for a “proactive commitment to digital regulation and fairness”.

ENVIRONMENT

EP far-right groups join forces to overturn green deal

After the Patriots for Europe group sent a letter to the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), Europe of Sovereign Nations (ESN) and European People's Party (EPP) groups suggesting them to join action to temporarily suspend green norms, ECR seems to have accepted the bid as “we are open to further discussions with those who share our concerns about the economic and social implications of the Green Deal”. However, EPP's top representative, Ursula Von der Leyen, was clear while presenting the EU's Competitiveness Compass, stating that the EU will stay the course with the Green Deal objectives.

DEFENCE

Commission strengthens EU defence capabilities

The European Commission has allocated €1 billion from the European Defence Fund (EDF) to develop next generation defence technologies and innovation. Executive Vice-President Virkkunen and Commissioner Kubilius have stated that the allocation reinforces EU commitment to strengthen the European defence industry and develop next generation technologies needed to keep European citizens safe. With the adoption of the 2025 Work Programme under the EDF, the Commission has committed to spend €5.4 billion in defence research and development.

HEALTH

Commissioner Varhelyi closes the EU Health Summit

“Now is the time to make the EU an innovation powerhouse again, and to reshape health for a stronger Europe”, said Commissioner Várhelyi in the closing remarks of the 2025 EU Health Summit on Tuesday. The event, which took place in Brussels, aimed to map the future of healthcare in Europe and explore the EU's role in addressing health challenges. Keeping the health sector on the political agenda, the growth of the EU economy and Europe's security were the main topics of the summit, which also set forth several recommendations for the future of the healthcare sector.